

REMARKS

Upon entry of the present amendment, the specification will have been amended to eliminate a minor informality therefrom. Additionally, claims 11, 13, 16 and 18 will have been amended while claims 12, 15 and 17 will have been canceled. Further, claims 21-23 will have been submitted for consideration by the Examiner.

In view of the herein contained amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of each of the outstanding rejections in the present application. Such action is respectfully requested and is now believed to be appropriate and proper.

In the outstanding Official Action, the Examiner confirmed the establishment of a Request for Continued Examination (RCE) and reopening of prosecution based on the submission filed on September 8, 2003.

Initially, Applicants wish to respectfully thank the Examiner for indicating the allowability of claims 1, 2, 4-7, 9 and 10. Applicants further wish to respectfully thank the Examiner for indicating that claims 13, 14 and 18-20 are objected to but contain allowable subject matter.

Applicants further thank the Examiner for confirming the acceptance of Applicants drawings filed on September 19, 2001 as well as for acknowledging Applicants Claim for

Priority and receipt of the certified copy of the priority document upon which the Claim for Priority is based.

Turning to the action on the merits, the Examiner rejected claims 11 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by YAMADA (U.S. Patent No. 4,710,012). Claims 12 and 17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over YAMADA. Claim 15 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as unpatentable over YAMADA in view of FUKUI (U.S. Patent No. 6,167,202).

Applicants respectfully traverse each of the above rejections and submit that they are inappropriate with respect to the combinations of features recited in Applicants claims. Applicants respectfully submit that the disclosures of the references cited by the Examiner are inadequate and insufficient to render unpatentable any of the combinations of features recited in Applicants claims. Thus, Applicants respectfully traverse each of the Examiner's rejections and request withdrawal thereof, together with an indication of the allowability of all the claims pending herein, in due course.

Applicants invention is directed to a zoom flash and a zoom flash photography system. In particular, features of Applicants invention are directed to a uniform flash emission process which is described in the present application, inter alia, at pages 129-141. In accordance with the uniform flash emission process, the illuminance of an object at a particular distance is constant regardless of variations in the illumination angle of the flash

device or the maximum guide number of the flash device when the relationship set forth in Table 7 (page 131) is satisfied.

Applicants' claimed invention is directed to a zoom flash having a light emitter, a zoom driver and a detecting device. Further, a calculator is provided to calculate a pre-flash emission level in accordance with a distance set by the zoom driver so that illuminance on an object at a predetermined distance is substantially constant regardless of a variation in the illumination angle. Further, Applicants invention includes a controller which activates the light emitter to emit a preliminary flash emission before a main flash emission by supplying a voltage corresponding to the pre-flash emission level for the light emitter. Additionally, the zoom flash according to the present invention includes a memory which stores data related to a maximum guide number that varies in accordance with the distance and related to a constant predetermined reference guide number. In accordance with the features of Applicants invention, the calculator calculates the pre-flash emission level by using the data in the memory to ensure that the illuminance of an object at a specific distance is constant.

Applicants' claimed invention is further directed to a flash photography system having a camera body and at least one zoom flash with the zoom flash being activated to emit a preliminary flash emission before a main flash emission. The at least one zoom flash includes a light emitter, a zoom driver and a detector. A memory stores data related to a maximum guide number that varies in accordance with the distance and related to a constant

predetermined reference guide number. Further, one of the camera body and the at least one flash includes a calculator that calculates a pre-flash emission level according to the distance set by the zoom driver so that an illuminance on an object at a predetermined distance is substantially constant regardless of a variation of the illumination angle and a controller that activates the light emitter to emit a predetermined flash emission by supplying a voltage corresponding to the pre-flash emission level for the light emitter before the main emission. In accordance with the features of Applicants invention, the calculator calculates the pre-flash emission level by using the data stored in the memory.

It is respectfully submitted that the combination of features defining Applicants invention as recited in, inter alia, claims 11 and 16 is not taught, disclosed nor rendered obvious by the references cited by the Examiner.

The primary reference relied upon by the Examiner, YAMADA, does not disclose a zoom flash having a uniform flash emission process as recited in Applicants claims. In particular, YAMADA does not teach that the amount of the pre-flash emission is calculated based on data stored in the memory and as defined in Applicants' claims.

In particular, while YAMADA does disclose a memory circuit in Fig. 1(A), the data stored therein does not correspond to the data recited in Applicants claims. In particular, and as set forth in YAMADA at column 4, lines 33-44, the terminal t7 of the memory circuit receives a timing signal from terminal t2 of the timer circuit T1. The memory circuit

memorizes the input levels at the terminals t1 to t3 and based on such input levels, an appropriate one of the transistors 55-57 is turned ON. Accordingly, it is quite clear that YAMADA does not disclose the combination of features recited in Applicants claims. In particular, at least a memory as recited in the combinations of Applicants claims is not taught, disclosed nor rendered obvious by YAMADA.

Similarly with regard to the FUKUI reference cited by the Examiner, while the same does disclose a memory, it does not disclose, in the claimed combinations, that the amount of the pre-flash emission is calculated based on the data from the memory as recited in Applicants claims.

Accordingly, it is clear that no proper combination of these references, and certainly these references individually, cannot anticipate nor render unpatentable the combination of features recited in Applicants claims. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding rejections together with an indication of the allowability of all the claims pending in the present application.

In addition to, and independently of, the above, Applicants respectfully submit that the Examiner has not set forth a proper basis for modifying (i.e., combining) the references as proposed in the Official Action. In particular, the Examiner has set forth no motivation, flowing from the prior art, for the proposed modifications. Accordingly, for this additional

reason, it is respectfully submitted that the claims in the present application are patentable over the references cited by the Examiner.

By the present response, Applicants have submitted several additional claims for consideration. These claims recite further features of Applicants' invention and thus afford Applicants the scope of coverage to which they are entitled. These claims are submitted to be allowable, both because they depend from shown to be allowable claims, as well as based upon their own recitations.

Applicants further note the Examiner's statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter. In this regard, while Applicants do not necessarily disagree with any of the features enumerated by the Examiner, Applicants wish to point out that each of the claims in the present application recites a particular combination of features and that the patentability of each claim is thus based upon the particular combination of features recited therein. Accordingly, the reasons for allowance should not be limited to those features enumerated by the Examiner.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Applicants have made a sincere effort to place the present application in condition for allowance and believe that they have now done so. Applicants have amended several of the claims and submitted several additional claims for consideration. Additionally, Applicants have eliminated a minor informality in the specification.

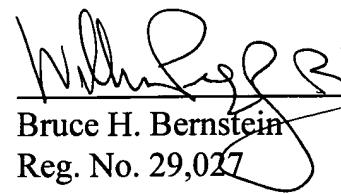
Applicants have discussed the features of Applicants invention with reference to the specification upon which Applicants claims are based. Applicants have further discussed the disclosures of the references cited by the Examiner. Applicants have pointed out the shortcomings of the references cited by the Examiner with respect to the claimed features of Applicants invention. Applicants have further shown how the features recited in Applicants claims are not taught, disclosed nor rendered obvious by the applied references, whether considered individually or whether considered in any proper combination. Accordingly, Applicants have provided a clear evidentiary basis supporting the patentability of all the claims in the present application and respectfully request an indication to such effect in due course.

The amendments to the claims which have been made in this amendment do not narrow the claims and that have not been specifically noted to overcome a rejection based upon the prior art, should be considered to have been made for a purpose unrelated to patentability, and no estoppel should be deemed to attach thereto.

P21042.A05

Should the Examiner have any questions or comments regarding this Response, or the present application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,
Masahiro KAWASAKI et al.


Bruce H. Bernstein
Reg. No. 29,027

February 13, 2004
GREENBLUM & BERNSTEIN, P.L.C.
1950 Roland Clarke Place
Reston, VA 20191
(703) 716-1191